



**El Centro de Corazón**  
*Quality Health Care*

## **Strengthening Partnerships: Enhancing Hospital-Clinic Collaboration**

**Presenter: Kavon L. Young, MD**  
**Chief Clinical Officer**  
**El Centro de Corazón**





# Financial Disclosures

- The presenter has nothing to disclose





# Learning Objectives

- By the end of this session, the participant will be able to:
  - Describe common barriers to effective coordination between hospital-based care and outpatient services
  - Identify 1 or more strategy for facilitating effective coordination between hospital and clinical settings





El Centro de Corazón  
Quality Health Care

# El Centro's Mission Statement

- To be the leader in improving the well-being of the communities we serve through the provision of quality health care and the delivery of collaborative community programs.





# El Centro's Vision

- To be the cornerstone of a healthier community





# El Centro de Corazón

- Accomplished Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) located in Houston's East End
- Providing services since 1994
- Three (3) health centers
  - John S. Dunn Health Center
  - Magnolia Health Center
  - Eastwood Health Center
- Six (6) Service Lines
  - Family Medicine
  - Pediatrics
  - Women's Health
  - Dental
  - Wellness
  - Behavioral Health



# Key Statistics and Demographics

- In 2023, El Centro served over 12,000 unique patients over 47,347 encounters
- More than 80% of patient population best served in a language other than English





# Clinical Providers

- 12 Medical Providers
  - 5 Women's Health
- 5 Dental Providers
- 4 BHS Providers
  - Includes Psychiatry
- 1 Wellness Provider
  - RD







# Women's Health Services



- Well Woman Exams
- Prenatal Care
- Postpartum Care
- Pelvic Ultrasounds
- 20-week Anatomy Scans
- Colposcopies
- LEEP Procedures
- Endometrial Biopsies
- STI Testing
- Pregnancy Testing
- Family Planning
- Mammogram Referrals
- Infertility Evaluation
- Treatment of routine gyn disorders
- Evaluation and management of pelvic floor disorders





# Hospital Partner: HCA Houston Southeast



- One of thirteen hospitals in the HCA Houston Healthcare network of hospitals
- Located in the Pasadena area/suburb of Houston
- Provides comprehensive labor and delivery services, including 24/7 obstetricians and anesthesia services, as well as dedicated C-section operating rooms.
- Recently received the Healthgrades Labor and Delivery Excellence Award™



# HCA Houston Healthcare Southeast Women and Neonatal

*Awarding Winning  
Culture,  
Award Winning Service,  
Award Winning Outcomes*

- ❖ Exclusive Level 3 NICU and Maternal Facility in Pasadena
- ❖ 2500+ Deliveries per year
- ❖ OB ED in Labor and Delivery unit
- ❖ 24/7 OB Hospitalist
- ❖ 24/7 Neonatal Nurse Practitioner or Neonatologist
- ❖ Lactation Support
- ❖ MFM Support
- ❖ Stabilize and care for neonates of all gestation



Houston Business Journal Best Place to Work - **12 times!**



TEXAS  
Health and Human  
Services

- NICU Level III Designation
- Maternal Level III Designation

## Excellence Award™



Obstetrics and Gynecology  
Excellence Award: Top 5%  
(2018 - 2022)



Labor and Delivery  
Excellence Award: Top 5%  
(2015 - 2022)



Vaginal Delivery  
(2015 - 2022)



C-Section Delivery  
(2015 - 2022)

## Five-Star Recipient



Critical Care Excellence Award™ (2024)



Surgical Care Excellence Award™ (2024)



Labor and Delivery Excellence Award™ (2023, 2022, 2021)



Obstetrics and Gynecology Excellence Award™ (2023, 2022, 2021)



Patient Safety Excellence Award™ (2023, 2022)

## HCA Houston Southeast-El Centro Collaboration

- Partnership began in November 2013
- Data fueled the decision
  - Subjective: Patients desired to deliver at HCA Houston Southeast
  - Objective: Pasadena zip codes are in El Centro's Top 20 zip codes
- HCA Houston Southeast is a well-recognized facility with good patient outcomes





# Collaboration Simply Put....

- A community health center has a partnership with a local hospital to provide labor and delivery services and transition of care back to the community health center
- An HCA employee is embedded in El Centro's Magnolia Health Center
  - Serves as a vital member of El Centro's Women's Health section
  - Functions as a patient navigator to El Centro patients who desire to deliver at HCA Houston Southeast





# Team Based Care

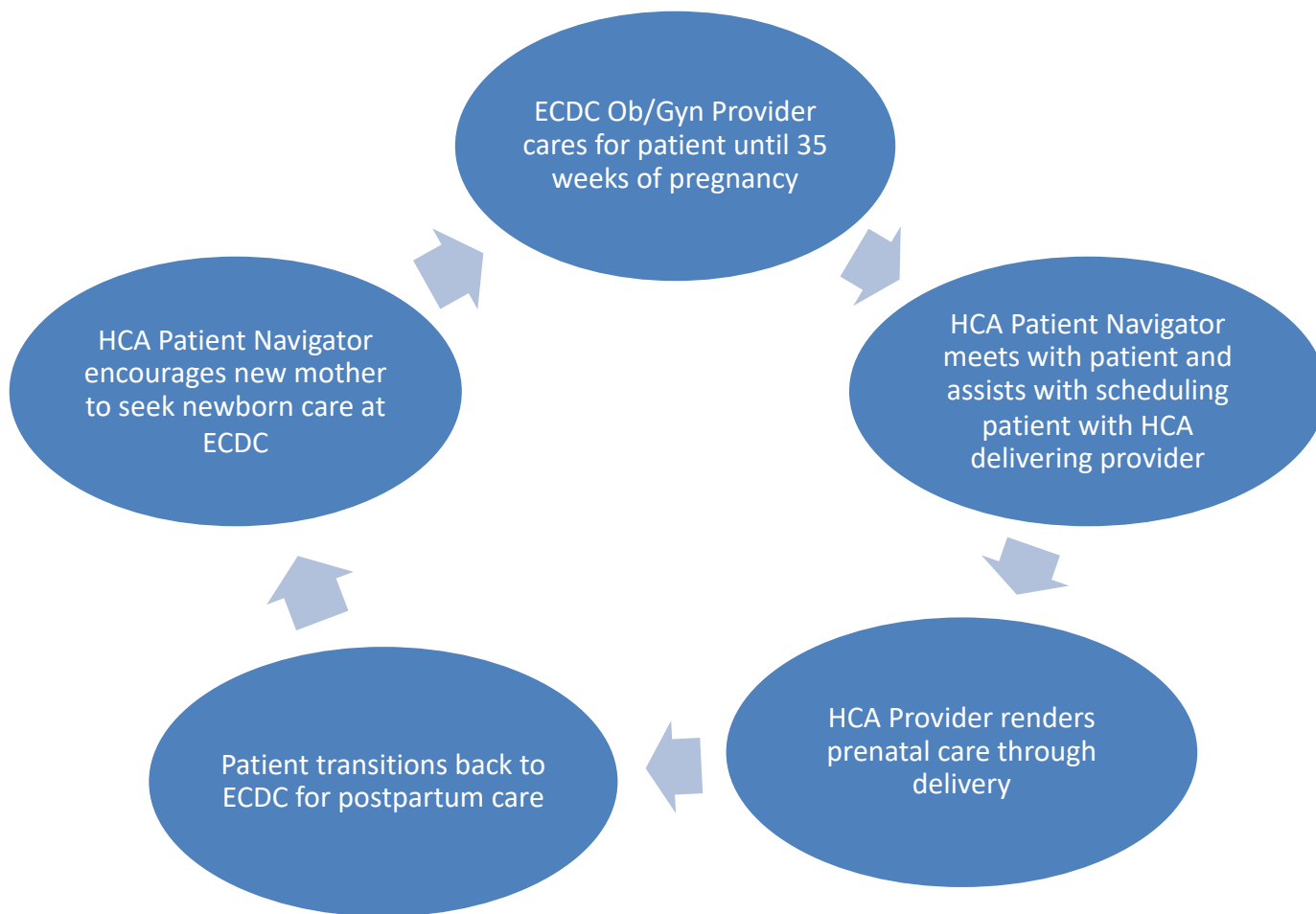


- “....the provision of health services to individuals, families, and/or their communities by at least two health providers who work **collaboratively** with patients and their caregivers-to the extent **preferred by each patient-**to accomplish **shared goals within and across settings** to achieve **coordinated, high-quality care.**”





# Referral Process



# From Elizabeth C., HCA Patient Navigator



- “My role as a navigator is to help guide patients once a referral has been initiated. I assist by collaborating with the El Centro Team.”
- “As a navigator, I am also a resource for patients, providing patient assistance with Medicaid enrollment, postpartum and pediatric care.”





# HCA Patient Navigator Roles and Responsibilities

- Obtain medical records for patients
- Communicate with HCA Providers to schedule patients
- Assist with pre-registration for delivery
- Encourages hospital tour
- Provides patient education
- Assist with applications





# Challenges to Hospital-Clinic Partnerships



- Exchange of Patient Records
  - “Sometimes the patients do not bring their records with them so we don’t have pertinent labs.”
  - Each organization has a different electronic health record
- Insurers/Payers
- Onboarding of new providers for both entities
- Transitions of Care and Scheduling



# Strategies to Overcome Common Barriers

- Agree on Common Goals
  - “wish to collaborate to increase the accessibility and enhance the quality of pregnancy services to the underserved and vulnerable populations served by El Centro and specifically to increase available services for prenatal/intrapartum care to members of those populations.”
- Use Technology
  - Recently provided HCA Houston providers “View Only Access”
  - Engage in local health information exchange partnerships/collaborations
- Maximize Scheduling
  - Use patient navigator to escalate and prioritize high-risk patients
  - Schedule holds for “El Centro patient” on HCA Provider schedule
- Pursue Advocacy
  - Listen to your patients (focus groups, patient satisfaction)
  - Enlist help from local city and/or county officials





# Internal Work- El Centro's Women's Health Department

- Section Lead Has Dedicated Administrative Time
  - Meetings with HCA Southeast Providers
  - Communicate with providers
  - Meet with El Centro providers to hear concerns
- Team Based Care
  - Provided dedicated space to HCA Patient Navigator
- El Centro/HCA Houston Southeast Contract Review
  - Is it the collaboration still mutually beneficial?
- Engage in QI and RM Activities Related to Collaboration
  - Development of Protocols/Desk Procedures
  - Peer Review
  - Chart Audits
- EHR Optimization





# Key Components for A Successful Collaboration

- Engaged Leadership
  - El Centro’s C-Suite and HCA’s leadership team has committed to this partnership as it fulfills each organization’s mission and provides value to the community
  - Regularly visit each other’s campuses
- Clearly Defined Roles and Responsibilities
- Open Lines of Communication
  - From the top down
  - Critical at the provider level
- Continuous Quality Improvement
  - Both organizations seek to improve and welcome feedback
  - Actions are taken swiftly





# Thank You!

- El Centro Women's Health Providers, Medical Assistants, Referral Specialists
- HCA Leadership
  - Yasmene Mc Daniels, CEO
  - Lindsay Swanagan, Vice President, Outpatient Services
  - Thelma Valle, Director, Women's Care Centers
- Elizabeth Chavez, Patient Navigator
  - You are the best!

